**Stations Reflection**

Even though I have only been a teacher for a few months, I have already used stations several times in my classroom. I can see how effective they are at getting several ideas across in a short period of time. For example, I did a stations lab for physical and chemical changes, and did about 8 stations where students had to predict, observe, and explain what happened (I call this the “POE” method). The downside of stations like this, however, is that classroom management can be extremely difficult. With people in so many different places, you really have to be walking around constantly. With my physical/chemical changes lab, I had a burning spilt station, which meant that I had to stand at the front of the classroom for the entire class. I had to have 6 sets of eyes to make sure that the students at the back of the classroom weren’t doing things unsafely. One suggestion that I received was to put the least dangerous (no poisons, no bad smells) at the back of the classroom, and the more dangerous ones near the station you have to stand at. This really helped me, and made my classroom more effective. It can also be hard to get students to rotate. With people at every station, one group can be finished before the others, and then they are standing around. One way to get around this would be to have questions for them to work on if they finish at their station early, and then students who take the whole time can work on the questions for homework, or at their desk after the activity.

The other kind of stations featured in the “Atomic Activities” article, which is more for different kinds of learners, I also think is a great idea because it brings in the concept of differentiated instruction into labs. I would love to try this in my classroom, especially for larger, integrated ideas like biology. I also liked how the ideas before the stations lab were introduced in a multi-learner kind of way. This is the kind of class that I would like to have, but my main issue is that I don’t know the course content well enough, so I can’t create amazing lessons without deviating from the plan set out for me.

I think that having stations in the classroom is great idea. It reminds me of having learning centers like you would have in an elementary school classroom – allowing everyone to be doing something, but not necessarily the same thing.